

Re-released Oct. 23, 2000, with corrected tables

Students sustain performance on statewide tests at 4, 8, and 10

MADISON—Nearly 200,000 students in grades four, eight, and 10 who took statewide assessments earlier this year sustained Wisconsin's high performance from last year, and some minority groups showed progress toward closing the achievement gap, especially in reading and mathematics.

"It should come as no surprise that students who score advanced and proficient on these tests typically come from families that value education," said State Superintendent John T. Benson in announcing the results. "We should be encouraged by the fact that even as more students take the tests, the percentage of Wisconsin students who achieve proficiency remains far above the national average."

Participation in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) increased among most subgroups. "For many years, students with disabilities were automatically excluded from taking statewide tests," Benson noted. "We have worked diligently with school districts in recent years to ensure that every child has an opportunity to participate in and learn from this important measure of their knowledge and skills."

The WKCE consists of short-answer and multiple-choice questions in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition, students write an essay.

The percentage of the state's 17,000 African-American students who scored proficient or advanced increased one point in reading and two points in both reading and mathematics in grade four, one point in reading in grade eight, and two points in reading and one point in mathematics in grade 10.

Still, the state superintendent expressed grave concern over the persistent achievement gap between white and minority students. Using mathematics as an example, he pointed out that 81 percent

(more)

wkce results/add one

of white students in fourth grade achieved proficiency, compared with 43 percent of black students and 49 percent of Hispanic students. Only 7 percent of black students achieved proficiency in eighth- and tenth-grade mathematics, compared to 48 percent of white eighth-graders and 44 percent of white 10th-graders.

“While we must be encouraged by any improvement, these results don’t warrant a lengthy celebration,” said Benson. “Indeed, they provide further evidence of the need for a Marshal Plan, engaging every adult in Milwaukee in ensuring that every child is in school every day.”

The state superintendent cited two Milwaukee elementary schools for “improving student learning in ways that make us take notice. Achievement levels of minority and low-income students at the Clark Street and Kilbourn schools are among the highest in the state. They provide examples of what works, and their success must be exported to struggling schools with similar student populations.”

Among other key findings are:

- Wisconsin students scored well above students nationally in every subject at every grade.
- Scores in mathematics and writing show the greatest need for improvement.
- Girls outscored boys in reading and language arts at every grade level. Boys scored higher in science in all grades and higher in mathematics in all grades but fourth.
- White students scored significantly higher in every subject at every grade level than students from other racial or ethnic groups. Scores for African-American students showed continued progress toward reducing the achievement gap.

Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations Performance

Percent of Total Students Enrolled Scoring Proficient and Advanced

	Nation			State		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Fourth Grade						
Reading	55	63	63	69	78	77
Language Arts*	34	60	60	NA	72	71
Mathematics	42	54	54	52	74	75
Science	56	64	64	64	87	87
Social Studies	53	62	62	62	85	86
Eighth Grade						
Reading	49	54	54	64	74	74
Language Arts*	15	53	53	NA	71	71
Mathematics	21	24	24	30	42	42
Science	41	44	44	56	66	68
Social Studies	56	60	60	69	82	81
10th Grade						
Reading	45	46	46	63	68	69
Language Arts*	21	43	43	NA	62	63
Mathematics	17	21	21	35	38	39
Science	32	33	33	43	50	52
Social Studies	50	50	50	65	75	75

* Scores for 1997-98 are for enhanced language which is a combined language arts and writing score. Language arts scores for 1997-98 are not available for Wisconsin.

(more)

wkce results/add two

- Dramatic differences exist in scores between
 - students whose English proficiency is limited and those who are proficient;
 - students who have disabilities and those who are nondisabled;
 - students whose families are economically disadvantaged and those whose families are not disadvantaged; and
 - students who were not in the same school district throughout the school year and those who stayed in same district the full academic year.

“Programs that reduce class sizes in the earliest grades, that involve parents and communities in children’s learning, and that enhance teachers’ knowledge and skills will allow us to continue to make progress in student achievement,” explained Benson.

“A free and appropriate public education is a birthright,” he concluded. “In Wisconsin, we have set a goal to have every student achieve at the proficient and advanced levels. It is a lofty and challenging goal that extends far beyond one set of tests. It is in fact the foundation for future success and ultimately for the preservation of our republic.”

-30-

ATTACHMENTS: Several tables that provide additional information are attached. District-by-district scores are available on the Department of Public Instruction website.

http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/oea/spr_kce.html



1999-00 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations

Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations Performance

Percent of Students in Each Proficiency Category

	Not Tested			Minimal			Basic			Proficient			Advanced		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Fourth Grade															
Reading	7	6	6	7	5	5	16	12	12	57	62	63	12	16	15
Language Arts*	7	6	6	NA	3	3	NA	19	20	NA	45	45	NA	27	27
Mathematics	6	4	4	8	2	2	34	19	19	37	45	43	15	30	31
Science	6	4	3	8	1	1	22	8	8	51	60	60	13	27	27
Social Studies	6	4	3	10	3	2	21	8	8	49	47	47	13	38	38
Eighth Grade															
Reading	5	4	4	17	11	11	15	12	12	48	57	56	16	17	17
Language Arts*	5	4	4	NA	6	5	NA	20	20	NA	43	44	NA	28	27
Mathematics	5	4	4	24	16	16	41	38	38	22	28	28	8	14	14
Science	5	4	4	12	7	6	27	23	23	40	49	50	16	17	18
Social Studies	5	4	5	8	4	4	18	10	11	43	43	44	26	40	37
10th Grade															
Reading	8	8	7	9	8	8	20	16	16	38	44	45	NA	25	24
Language Arts*	8	8	7	NA	7	7	NA	23	22	NA	45	46	NA	17	17
Mathematics	8	8	7	30	28	28	26	25	26	27	28	28	8	11	11
Science	9	8	8	18	7	7	30	34	33	34	43	45	9	7	8
Social Studies	9	8	7	10	5	5	15	11	12	38	43	44	27	32	31

* Scores for 1997-98 are for enhanced language which is a combined language arts and writing score. Language arts scores for 1997-98 are not available for Wisconsin.

General Proficiency Categories

Advanced	Distinguished in the content area. Academic achievement is beyond mastery. Test scores provide evidence of in-depth understanding in the academic content area tested.
Proficient	Competent in the content area. Academic achievement includes mastery of the important knowledge and skills. Test scores show evidence of skills necessary for progress in the academic content area tested.
Basic	Somewhat competent in the content area. Academic achievement includes mastery of most of the important knowledge and skills. Test scores show evidence of at least one major flaw in understanding the academic content area tested.
Minimal Performance	Limited in the content area. Test scores show evidence of major misconceptions or gaps in knowledge and skills basic to progress in the academic content area tested.

1999-00 WKCE Performance by Racial/Ethnic Group

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced

Fourth Grade	American Indian		Asian		Black		Hispanic		White		Not Identified	
	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00
Reading	66	68	57	56	49	50	55	52	84	84	72	70
Language Arts	56	58	54	55	46	46	50	46	78	77	66	62
Mathematics	61	62	57	58	41	43	50	49	81	81	70	66
Science	80	82	64	67	59	62	66	63	92	93	84	85
Social Studies	79	80	68	69	57	60	64	61	91	92	86	83
Percent Not Tested* Enrollment	3-7 962	3-6 962	21-23 2,242	20-22 2,227	7-8 6,966	5-8 7,164	17-19 2,511	22-25 2,819	2-4 50,993	2-3 51,010	5-8 533	7-13 620
Eighth Grade	American Indian		Asian		Black		Hispanic		White		Not Identified	
	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00
Reading	60	60	58	58	37	38	50	49	79	79	54	60
Language Arts	53	55	59	58	34	35	48	46	77	77	50	58
Mathematics	22	27	31	33	7	7	17	17	48	48	30	31
Science	47	52	46	50	22	23	35	38	74	75	50	55
Social Studies	69	68	68	67	44	42	60	57	88	87	67	71
Percent Not Tested* Enrollment	6 946	4-6 962	13 2,022	11-12 2,108	9-10 5,791	11-12 5,742	14-15 2,274	17-18 2,353	2 56,403	2 55,481	10-11 713	7 741
10th Grade	American Indian		Asian		Black		Hispanic		White		Not Identified	
	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00	98-99	99-00
Reading	49	46	52	52	27	29	40	40	74	74	45	48
Language Arts	41	41	43	44	22	23	34	34	68	69	41	43
Mathematics	15	15	29	31	6	7	15	13	43	44	19	23
Science	31	27	33	33	10	11	21	21	56	58	32	36
Social Studies	54	52	59	58	32	33	47	46	81	81	54	54
Percent Not Tested* Enrollment	14-17 821	12-14 870	15-16 1,830	15-16 1,971	26-30 5,028	26-29 4,964	24-28 2,214	25-27 2,232	5 58,389	5 58,066	17-19 1,304	19-23 1,003

* The percent not tested is a range of those students not tested on each of the five academic areas of the WKCE.

1999-00 WKCE Performance by Gender

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced

Fourth Grade	Female	Male	Not Identified
Reading	80	75	67
Language Arts	76	67	64
Mathematics	75	74	60
Science	86	88	78
Social Studies	86	85	73
Percent Not Tested* Enrollment	3-4 31,684	4-6 32,979	14-16 139
Eighth Grade	Female	Male	Not Identified
Reading	79	68	49
Language Arts	78	64	49
Mathematics	41	43	27
Science	66	70	43
Social Studies	82	80	58
Percent Not Tested* Enrollment	3 32,661	4-5 34,603	21-22 123
10th Grade	Female	Male	Not Identified
Reading	73	65	34
Language Arts	71	56	29
Mathematics	38	40	17
Science	49	56	24
Social Studies	77	74	39
Percent Not Tested* Enrollment	6-7 33,928	8-9 34,910	32-35 268

* The percent not tested is a range of those students not tested on each of the five academic areas of the WKCE.

1999-00 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations Performance

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced

Fourth Grade	Total Enrollment	% Not Tested*	Reading	Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Limited English Proficient	2,273	41-45	33	32	35	44	46
English Proficient	62,529	2-4	79	73	76	88	87
Students with Disabilities	8,594	13-27	37	28	39	66	65
Nondisabled	56,208	2	84	78	80	90	89
Economically Disadvantaged	17,665	6-9	60	55	56	74	72
Not Economically Disadvantaged	47,137	3-4	84	78	81	92	91
Not in District Full Academic Year	5,593	7-9	70	64	66	81	79
In District Full Academic Year	59,209	3-6	78	72	75	87	86
Eighth Grade	Total Enrollment	% Not Tested*	Reading	Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Limited English Proficient	1,276	42-44	24	23	9	18	32
English Proficient	66,111	3	75	72	43	68	82
Students with Disabilities	8,736	13-15	29	22	8	31	46
Nondisabled	58,651	2-3	80	78	48	73	86
Economically Disadvantaged	13,854	8-9	52	49	20	42	60
Not Economically Disadvantaged	53,533	2-3	79	77	48	74	86
Not in District Full Academic Year	4,466	9-10	61	57	28	53	69
In District Full Academic Year	62,921	3-4	75	72	43	69	82
10th Grade	Total Enrollment	% Not Tested*	Reading	Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Limited English Proficient	1,032	48-51	15	12	6	7	20
English Proficient	68,074	7	69	64	39	53	76
Students with Disabilities	7,247	22	20	14	5	15	31
Nondisabled	61,859	6	74	69	43	57	81
Economically Disadvantaged	10,266	18-20	43	37	16	26	49
Not Economically Disadvantaged	58,840	5-6	73	68	43	57	80
Not in District Full Academic Year	3,693	19-20	50	43	20	33	55
In District Full Academic Year	65,413	6-7	70	64	40	53	76

* The percent not tested is a range of those students not tested on each of the five academic areas of the WKCE.

1999-00 WKCE National Percentile Ranks

	Fourth Grade	Eighth Grade	10th Grade
Reading	64	65	69
Language Arts	63	68	72
Mathematics	71	71	74
Science	72	69	70
Social Studies	71	68	72

NOTE: The average national percentile rank for all subjects and grades levels is the 50th percentile.